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ABSTRACT

Two empirical studies were conducted in Indiana to ascertain the types of contributions residents of small towns and rural areas feel their community can perform for their subjective well being and to determine the degree to which these contributions are comparable among elderly and younger rural and urban residents. An "individual level perceived community function" approach was used in a questionnaire/survey in which respondents were asked to rate the value of certain community attributes. Ratings were then factor analyzed by principal component-varimax rotation procedures. Results of the first study indicated that both over-65 and under-65 groups looked to their small towns and rural communities to provide 3 functions: personal relations (proximity of friends and relatives), maintenance (jobs, shopping facilities, medical services), and personal development (availability of adult education opportunities). In larger communities, however, the groups differed as to which community attributes contributed to the three functions named above. Results of the second study indicated that both over-60 and under-60 age groups found satisfaction with maintenance attributes and personal relations attributes. In neither group, however, was the personal development area uniquely predictive of community satisfaction. The major difference between groups was that the under-60 groups found satisfaction in the recreational facilities attributes but the over-60 groups did not. Implications for future research were deemed many and varied. (AN)

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AGE AND ORIENTATIONS TOWARD RURAL COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTS

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Age and Orientations Toward Rural Community Environments

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Which functions, or types of contribution to one's subjective well-being, do residents anticipate a community will perform for them? To which attributes (services, facilities, social networks, etc.) do people turn for each function? Are these functions comparable among various sectors of the population?

Answers to these questions are essential for both practical and theoretical reasons. Illustratively, such information would suggest how local service delivery systems can be made more responsive to the unique requirements of a given community. Answers would both suggest features to be incorporated into a particular service delivery system and also identify bases of public support for or resistance to a specific service in a particular community. More generally, answers would contribute to establishing more meaningful methods for monitoring social change in American society. As noted by Rossi (1972), for one, development of social indicators of the quality of life found in American communities has encountered a major obstacle. A viable system of social indicators must incorporate community attributes directly pertinent to residents' well-being. Yet at present an integrated theoretical framework distinguishing between the more and the less relevant community features is lacking.

On a more theoretical level, answers to these questions would facilitate understanding the role of local services, facilities, and other attributes in satisfaction with the present community environment (e.g., Goudy, 1977; Rojeck, Clemente, and Summers, 1975) and in migration preferences (e.g., Ryan, Beaulieu, and Blake, 1976; Fuguitt and Zuiches, 1975; Zuiches, 1977). Given the absence of previous conceptual analyses of the contributions residents see attributes of the residential community make to their subjective well-being, many investigations of these issues necessarily have been somewhat atheoretical or ad hoc in nature. Answers to the above questions, then, would identify particular attributes that could be associated with community satisfaction or migration preferences and also suggest the bases for those associations.

This report examines the contributions which residents of small towns and rural areas see their residential community can perform for their subjective well-being, and considers the degree these contributions are comparable among elderly and younger residents. In overview, current theoretical approaches to subjective well-being are reviewed in terms of their applicability to this issue. Then an "individual level perceived community functions" approach is described. Two empirical studies based on this

perspective are presented. The first identifies three such functions of community attributes, assesses the similarity between elderly and younger persons in their perceptions of these functions, and investigates whether perceptions of residents of living in larger communities display functions similar to those hypothesized for smaller communities. The second study identifies a fourth perceived function, traces differences between elderly and younger residents, and estimates the relative contribution of these four functions to individuals' satisfaction with their present community.

Current Approaches

Current theoretical perspectives on subjective well-being and on the dynamics of residential community environments provide useful points of departure. In themselves, however, they cannot directly answer the questions, principally because they do not attempt to bridge the gap between the perceptual structure of individuals and attributes of the residential community environment. While the reader may be conversant with many of the points raised, review of selected present approaches will set the stage for the approach suggested here.

One current approach to subjective well-being is, first, to identify various domains or sectors of "life experience" and then to estimate the relationship of contentment with these domains to overall subjective well-being or satisfaction with particular environments. The items comprising a domain may be defined a priori on conceptual grounds, e.g., the classification of major domains by Campbell, Converse, and Rodgers (1976), or empirically by multivariate clustering or factoring techniques, e.g., Andrews and Withey (1976). Illustratively, these experiences may refer to critical incidents, i.e., events occuring in one's life that are seen by individuals as substantially enhancing or lowering their sense of well-being (Flanagan, 1978). Along similar lines are stressful life events such as depression, marriage or death of a spouse that can potentially imperil one's mental health (e.g., Bradburn, 1969; Bradburn and Caplovitz, 1965; Constantine, Braun, and Davis, 1973). Included also are satisfaction with particular conditions experienced by the individual which are specified in trans-situational terms such as satisfaction with one's standard of living (e.g., Medley, 1976) or health (e.g., Andrew and Withey, 1976), satisfaction with one's performance in a role such as worker (e.g., Campbell, Converse, and Rodgers, 1976), satisfaction with the tenor of one's relationship with significant others such as spouse or children (e.g., Andrews and Withey, 1976), or satisfaction with other areas of concern in one's daily life (Cantril, 1965).

Although this "experience domains" approach has been very useful in other contexts, it cannot by itself clarify the issue of which functions individuals see attributes of the local residential community can perform for their subjective well-being. The principal obstacle is the lack of direct correspondence between attributes of a community environment and life domains as specified in terms of "experiences." A clear example is that of interpersonal relationships. An experience domain posited by investigators (e.g., Andrews and Withey, 1974) pertains to the felt adequacy

of one's relationship with friends and/or family members. Strictly speaking, the tenor of one's relationships as fulfilling or unsatisfactory is not an attribute of the community environment per se, but rather is a reaction to an attribute. Spatial proximity to friends/family or frequency of contact with such significant others would be attributes of the extra-personal environment. Proximity or contact do not necessarily indicate that those relationships will be close or satisfying. Proximity and contact may facilitate the development of close primary ties (e.g., Athanasiou and Yoshioka, 1973; Fertinger, Schachter, and Back, 1950) and may be especially important to maintain social ties among the elderly (e.g., Nahemow and Lawton, 1975). Yet frequency of informal contacts with friends and relatives and more formal participation in social clubs do not inevitably preclude loneliness, stress, or unsatisfying relationships (e.g., Shanas and Townsend, 1968). Interaction with signigicant others does not imply intimacy or close relationships (e.g., Lowenthal and Haven, 1968). The disjuncture between life experience and environmental attribute paradigms precludes any direct generalization from the former to the latter. A residential community environment qua environment must be specified in terms of extra-rather than intra-personal properties.

A second, and distinctly different, approach is that of system or community level functions (e.g., Mercer, 1956; Parsons, 1960; Warren, 1963). Theoretically, in order to remain viable as an organized system residential communities, institutions, and other forms of social organization must ensure the performance of certain functions. If a residential community is to continue to exist as an entity, the institutions, groups, and individuals composing that community must provide a framework of norms and rules of behavior, must ensure that particular activities occur, and in other ways behave so as to provide for the continuity of the community. An example is Warren's (1963) hypothesized socialization function; some means must be developed to ensure that children and other new residents internalize the dictates and norms of the local culture if that community system is to survive the demise of the present generation of residents.

There is a major difficulty in directly applying this approach to identifying the contributions to subjective well-being which residents anticipate a community will perform for them. Current theories employing this "community level system functions" paradigm do not specify how the prerequisites for a viable community system are related to the needs of individual residents. The welfare of individuals in a community system cannot be understood by attending solely to the maintenance requirements of the community as a supra-individual system (cf. Mercer, 1956). As Gerson noted (1976), to solve the ancient problem of balancing the good of the individual and the good of society as a whole, one should assess the pattern of interaction between individuals and the environment. Beyond considering individual quality of life in communal terms, one must also define system or communal quality of life in individual terms.

Yet another current approach may be labeled a "specific community attribute" perspective. In this model the contribution or role of specific services or facilities is estimated from the association between indices of subjective well-being and the quality/quantity of an attribute. In the

typical study particular community attributes are selected and measures of the actual condition of those attributes (e.g., Galle, Gove, and McPherson, 1972; Zehner, 1977) or indices of individuals' reactions to the present condition of those attributes (e.g., Campbell, et al., 1976), are developed. Next, subjective well-being is gauged either in objective terms such as recidivism among mental patients (Smith, 1977) homocide rates (Booth and Welch, 1973), or other forms of individuals' pathology (e.g., Galle, et al., 1972); or it may be gauged by subjective (evaluative) indicators such as happiness (e.g., Bradburn and Caplovitz, 1965) overall life satisfaction (e.g., Zehner, 1977), or satisfaction with one's community environment in toto (e.g., Goudy, 1977). Analyses of the data attempt to identify the unique contribution a given attribute or set of attributes make to subjective well-being.

Although this approach has been quite valuable in identifying linkages between various subjective states and facets of the external environment, three complications preclude its direct application to the questions posed here. The first two are procedural issues that render the bulk of past studies using this model equivocal when applied to the current questions, while the third problem is inherent in the model itself. The first problem is that the approach hinges upon the actual variability in the condition or availability of the attribute in the sample of communities investigated. Limited variation in an attribute may readily lead to underestimates of the importance of that attribute. An obvious paradox is that the importance of those attributes truly fundamental to the survival of a community and its residents (e.g., provision for at least some emergency medical assistance, employment or other means of providing income) may readily be underestimated due to restricted variability (cf. Strumpel, 1974). If particular attributes are actually essential to the maintenance of a residential community, any sample of "live" communities by definition would contain very few in which these attributes were nonexistent or seriously malfunctioning. On the other hand, in lieu of an established theoretical paradigm an attribute can be misspecified and the importance of that attribute can easily be overestimated. This may occur with objectively defined attributes when an "intrinsically unimportant" attribute is related (such as by a common delivery system) to an "intrinsically important" attribute not specifically included in the analysis. Overestimates may be especially troublesome when the condition or availability of an attribute is indexed in more subjective terms such as by resident satisfaction with that attribute. Is an association between satisfaction with an attribute and overall subjective well-being due to the former determining the latter? Or is the association a function of the well known halo effect (cf. Guilford, 1954) occurring when the evaluation of one's life or of the community as a whole colors one's reactions to specific parts of that whole? These considerations suggest that any investigation based heavily upon the actual variability in the condition or availability of specific attributes may potentially misestimate the function or contribution played by community attributes. What is needed is a measure that is as free as possible from the actual condition of those local communities included in the study. For example, an analysis based upon individuals' satisfaction with the current condition of local attributes would be less acceptable than an analysis assessing one's preferences for having particular attributes in any community in which one might live.

A second complication in applying previous investigations to the present

questions pertains to many, but certainly not to all (e.g., Rojeck, et al., 1975; Goudy, 1977) past studies. Multiple regression or other statistical techniques have been used to assess the unique contribution of single attributes to well-being. Such analyses are difficult to interpret in light of the hypothesized (e.g., Clark, 1973; Warren, 1963) multifunctional and substitutable nature of community attributes. A single service or other attribute may play a variety of roles, may make more than a single contribution to residents' welfare. For example, the school system can provide for the socialization of the young (Warren, 1963), yet it may typically be seen by the public as basically job training (Campbell and Eckerman, 1964). Further, numerous attributes may be addressed to the same underlying function or contribution. Illustratively, movies, parks, swimming pools, and other such attributes provide recreation and entertainment for local residents. Within limits (Christensen and Yoesting, 1978; Tinsley, Barrett, and Kass, 1977), residents may perceive many of these as substitutable or complementary (e.g., Christensen and Yoesting, 1978; Meyersohn, 1972; O'Leary, Field, and Schreuder, 1974).

For these reasons, we would suggest that community functions may be demonstrated more clearly in the overlaps among perceptions of various attributes than in residents' unique reactions to a specific service or facility. Operationally, the commonality among perceptions of various attributes estimated by a factor or cluster analysis may be a more easily interpreted index of a perceived contribution to well-being than are reactions to a single attribute or to that aspect of a single attribute not shared with other attributes included in a given analysis. At heart, this is a special case of the now traditional rationale for the use of composite indicators of social well-being (e.g., Smith, 1973) and for the use of multiple item indicators of individuals' attitudes (e.g., Nunnally, 1967).

The third and more basic obstacle is that the model does not explicitly consider perceived contributions. When the availability or condition of community attributes is measured objectively, there is no guarantee that individuals' judgements will be consistent with these states (e.g., d'Iribarne, 1974). Even if such knowledge is demonstrated, an observed association between the availability/condition of an attribute and one's subjective well-being does not indicate which of many possible functions residents see that attribute to play. Although indices of resident satisfaction or other more subjective measures of the quality/quantity of an attribute may avoid the former difficulties, they do not necessarily avoid the latter.

A fourth approach worthy of note is the "social ecological" paradigm developed by Moos and associates (Insel and Moos, 1974 a and b; Moos, 1973, 1974; Moos and Insel, 1974). Correctional institutions, universities, hospital wards and other human environments vary on particular psychosocial dimensions representing the tenor of the person-milieu interactions within those environments. A series of these "social climate" dimensions have been postulated. For example, "peer cohesion" refers to the degree to which individuals perceive that their interpersonal relations encourage them to provide mutual assistance. "Clarity" is the extent to which the rules and policies governing that environment are made explicit. The degree

to which individuals perceive that a particular climate characterizes their environment is associated with the level of well-being experienced by those individuals (cf. Insel and Moos, 1974 a). For example, Caffrey (1969) studied the environments of Benedictine and Trappist monks and found a prevalence of coronary heart disease in those environments characterized as competitive with a sense of time urgency.

This approach has much to recommend it as a point of departure for investigations of the functions that individuals see their residential community can perform for their subjective well-being. It identifies a wide range of salient features of a living environment. Its broad scope may thereby help to avoid the problem noted by Goudy (1977) in his review of community satisfaction studies; past investigations, he contended, have shown an excessive concentration upon the economic and physical attributes and a corresponding underemphasis upon the more social attributes of a community. Further, it can be seen to occupy the middle ground between the approaches labeled here as "community level system functions" and "experience domains" in that it focuses upon individuals' reactions to those attributes of an environment important to their well-being. In this way it displays a thrust which Gerson (1976), for one, sees as necessary for a workable theory of quality of life. That is, it emphasizes patterns of interaction among people within a setting, patterns which both mold individuals as individuals and which stem from their activities. In addition, we should note that by concentrating upon clusters of features that play a common role, it implicitly can take into account the multifunctional and substitutable nature of environmental attributes.

On the other hand, previous studies using the social ecological model cannot answer the questions posed here. First, the present questions pertain to the way individuals conceptualize their residential environment. With few exceptions, the dimensions employed in previous investigations did not necessarily represent perceptual dimensions, i.e., perspectives along which individuals cognitize their residential community environment. With some notable exceptions (e.g., Stern, 1970), analyses of dimensions relevant to the individual's welfare in a given environment typically have not verified by direct empirical test the dimensionality of individuals' perceptions of environmental attributes. It is possible that distinctions drawn by the investigators among different dimensions or subdimensions did not correspond to the distinctions visualized by members of that environment. For example, members may have perceived a smaller number of dimensions, each containing a larger number of attributes, than did the investigators.

Second, in the social ecological approach the number and the nature of the subdimensions composing a higher order dimension vary somewhat from one type of environment to another, as do the empirical referents (operational definitions) of the dimensions and subdimensions. Illustratively, in discussing the "support" dimension of social climate, Insel and Moos (1974:181-182) note:

> "For example, work environments have two distinctly different support elements. One element is called 'peer cohesion' and accounts for the social and interpersonal relationships that develop among workers and their tendency to stick together and

> help each other. The second element, called 'staff support,' accounts for the degree of friendship and communication between management and nonmanagement personnel and the extent to which management encourages and helps nonmanagement personnel. These two elements identify a distinction between peer support and supervisor or staff support. In psychiatric and correctional environments, peer support tends to merge with staff support. In fact, it is difficult to find programs where these two support variables are not correlated positively. However, in a work environment, nonmanagement personnel frequently spend a great deal of time together, maintaining a separate factor of cohesiveness."

With but few exceptions (Blake, Weigl and Perloff, 1975; Moos and Brownstein, 1977; Moos 1976) the social ecological paradigm has not been applied to residential community environments. Hence, the dimensions hypothesized to describe other environments may not directly apply to residential communities. A similar question can be raised about the applicability of given dimensions to subpopulations such as elderly residents of small communities. That a set of environmental attributes play a particular role for the general public does not necessarily imply that they play a similar role for a specific subpopulation.

In conclusion, current concepts cannot satisfactorily answer the questions posed here. The foregoing considerations indicate that a workable approach would have several features. It would specify the residential community environment in terms of attributes external to the individual rather than as intra-personal characteristics or experiences. The attributes would potentially be interpretable as pertaining directly to the well-being of residents qua individuals rather than solely to the "well-being" of the community as a supra-individual entity. It must be addressed to the individuals' perceptions of attributes and specify the dimensionality of those perceptions. Operational measures of the attributes' contribution should be based as little as possible on the actual availability/conditions or the actual organization of local attributes. Finally, for simplicity of interpretation, a workable approach could consider clusters of attributes rather than the operation of single attributes.

An "Individual Level Perceived Community Function" Approach

An "individual level perceived community function" (more simply, a "perceived function") is a type of contribution to subjective well-being for which members of a residential community look to particular community attributes. A "function" would be a set of one or more interrelated needs (reinforcements) that are met (provided) through usage of particular attributes or simply through the presence of those attributes in the community. A "perceived function," in turn, would be the anticipation by residents that a particular configuration of needs/reinforcements would be addressed by a set of one or more attributes of the community environment.

Community functions should be identifiable in residents' preferences for or demands to have particular properties available to them in a

residential community. More specifically, the potential multifunctional and substitutable nature of a function suggests that a function should be more interpretable when seen in the covariance among attribute preferences than in the preference for a single attribute. For example, it may be difficult to interpret residents' beliefs that having indoor entertainment facilities available is important to their welfare. Does such a preference indicate the existence of a recreation function? Or is it a form of desire for a healthy economic base, comparable in part to the production/distribution/consumption function of Warren (1963)? The value residents ascribe to indoor entertainment facilities might be more readily understood if it were known that such a preference correlated highly with the values individuals see in having access to parks and other outdoor recreational facilities or in the availability of social clubs. The covariance (or communalities, in factor analytic terms) among these attribute preferences might well be a clearer index of a perceived recreation function than is the preference for any one of these attributes.

Which perceived functions characterize the orientations of small town and rural residents to their communities? Based on the social ecological approach of Moos and on its application to residential communities by Blake, Weigl, and Perloff (1975), four such functions could be hypothesized. The first dimension, "personal relationship," pertains to attributes indicative of the potential for residents to provide affective support for each other. An illustrative attribute would be proximity to close personal friends. A second perceived function would be "maintenance and change." Here would be the attributes such as employment opportunities and the presence of shopping facilities providing for the long term survival of the community and of its constituent members.

The third perceived function, "personal development," is analogous to that conceived by Moos and colleagues. It refers to attributes (e.g., adult education classes) which provide opportunities for personal growth and self-realization. The final dimension may be labeled "recreation," in that it includes attributes which permit a person to experience variety, to experience stimulation or relaxation, or in other ways provide for the entertainment of residents. The distinction between the personal development and recreation functions may be a bit fine, in that particular community attributes such as the presence of museums or the availability of craft clubs may be relevant to both functions. A given leisure activity can be a source of self-worth or self-respect, a locus for social participation (i.e., a place to make friends), a source of status or prestige, an entry to new experiences, a way to pass time, etc. (Havighurst, 1972 a; Meyersohn, 1972). On the other hand, the distinction between the two may be meaningful. Not only may individuals distinguish between the two in the roles they see community attributes to play, but also the two may differ in the magnitude of their contributions to the adequacy of the residential community environment. That is, individuals may see opportunities or events providing excitement, entertainment, relaxation, or similar experiences pertinent to recreation community attributes as different from creative self expression, enhancement of skills, or comparable experiences pertinent to community attributes we term personal development (e.g., Andrews and Withey, 1976; Tinsley, Barrett, and Kass, 1977). If people differentiate between the two realms of experience they may possibly distinguish also

between community attributes directly pertinent to those realms of experience. Further, the implications of the two may be different for residents' welfare. While a vast number of people find stimulation and variety rewarding, while many find relaxation attractive, a relatively small number should be seeking opportunities for self realization (e.g., Maslow, 1962; Mitchell, Logothetti, and Kantor, 1971). Hence, in the general populace recreation attributes may play a larger role than do personal development opportunities in determining the adequacy of the community environment. In the final analysis, however, the distinction between a recreation and a personal development function is an empirical question yet to be answered by empirical research.

That four perceived functions are anticipated to characterize the orientations of residents toward community attributes does not necessarily imply that in all communities four and only four unique perceptual dimensions composed of exactly the same community attributes will emerge in residents' valuations. Rather, we would speculate that these four dimensions would be general across communities. In a given community environment, subdimensions of the four may emerge, but we would anticipate that these subdimensions would tend to cluster into the "basic" four functions outlined above. Further, the specific attributes expressing a function should vary with the experiences of the residents within the communities in question. For example, consider long term residents of communities heavily dependent upon tourism for their economic vitality. Will such people consider parks, movie theaters, and other recreational facilities as relevant to a maintenance function rather than simply to recreation per se? Consistent with the application of a social ecological paradigm to other environments (e.g., Insel and Moos, 1974; Moos and Brownstein, 1977), then, we would expect that these four "basic" dimensions would hold across various residential community environments. The specific attributes composing a given dimension and the existence of any subdimensions within that dimension, however, may vary somewhat from one type of community to another.

While a given set of perceived functions may be seen as characteristic of the general resident population, there may be differences among subpopulations in perceived functions. These differences may be traceable to the fact that the strengths of the relevant needs/reinforcements may vary across subpopulations. For example, a younger person confronted with establishing a family and developing a set of specific occupational skills, may identify a different set of community attribute functions than an older person who may be in the process of adjusting to retirement and the departure of children from the home (Atchley, 1977:88). Another source of subpopulation differences might be variations in the extent to which groups look to the local residential community to meet these needs. For example, those more mobile geographically or occupationally may look more to professional groups or to other such sources rather than simply to the immediate residential community for satisfaction of many needs (e.g., Lawton and Nahemow, 1973; Rodgers, 1977). Subpopulation differences may be particularly likely when a subpopulation is isolated from the general populace. When a subpopulation is integrated into the larger social network of the community, the informal pressures toward conformity arising from frequent interaction with others and from the use of a common information base may tend to counteract the influence of those factors generating idiosyncratic views of community attributes. The above conceptualization of perceived community functions is based upon the general social ecology paradigm. Although three of the four hypothesized functions

are similar to the three dimensions considered by Moos and associates, the present approach differs from previous applications of the paradigm in several important ways. The principal differences are that perceived functions pertain specifically to the residential community environment, are specified solely in terms of extra-personal characteristics of that environment, and are posited as unique perceptual dimensions in the eyes of members of that environment.

STUDY 1

The principal purpose of Study 1 was to verify the existence of three of the perceived functions described above in the orientations of the more elderly (over 65 years of age) and the younger (under 65) residents of small towns and rural areas. Administrative factors precluded testing for a separate personal development dimension. However, one additional attribute, opportunities for participation in public affairs, was included to see if generational differences would emerge in an attribute relevant to one's role in the larger community (cf. Flanagan, 1978). Secondarily, the study intended to assess whether comparable functions would characterize the orientations of the two age groups living in more urban communities of 10,000 to 50,000 population.

As indicated by Blake, et al., (1975), the maintenance function should be identifiable in resident orientations toward medical services, employment opportunities, the educational system, and access to stores and businesses. The personal relationship area would be reflected in individuals' values toward proximity to one's friends and to relatives. Outdoor recreation opportunities, indoor entertainment facilities, and social clubs or organizations would be pertinent to the recreation function.

It was expected that the orientations of elderly residents would correspond closely to those of younger residents in small towns and rural areas. Compared to more urban areas, in small towns and rural areas the elderly are more thoroughly integrated into the formal organizations and informal social networks of the larger community (cf. Lawton, 1977). Although not necessarily having more contact with one's own children and other relatives (Bultena, 1969; Youmans, 1963), the elderly in small town and rural areas may have more informal social interaction with friends and neighbors than do the urban elderly (Bultena, 1969; Powers, Keith, and Goudy, 1975; Schooler, 1970; Youman, 1963). The greater interaction in small communities is not limited to interactions to age peers but includes more cross generational relationships (Langford, 1962). In larger communities such cross generational ties may be hindered by age segregated housing patterns found there (Kennedy and deJong, 19).

It was predicted, then, that in smaller towns and rural areas the views of the elderly would coincide with the views of the younger residents in that both age groups would display the three perceived functions of maintenance, personal relations, and recreation. In larger communities, the views of the elderly would diverge from the three dimensional pattern found among younger residents.

Method

Respondents

A questionnaire was mailed to a stratified random sample of 8,037 Indiana heads of households drawn from a comprehensive listing of automobile registrants. Elimination of those who were deceased or who could not be contacted by mail reduced the sample to 7,558 eligible respondents. Of these 71% (5,365) returned the questionnaire during one of the four waves of the survey. Rejection for failure to provide usable responses to all relevant questions further reduced the sample to 4,619. From these, 3,451 were chosen for study. The principal sample was those 65 years or more (n = 284), and those under 65 (n = 1997) living in communities of under 10,000 population. A comparison sample include those over 65 (n = 112) and those under 65 (n = 1,058) living in urban communities of 10,000 to 50,000 residents.

Measures

Respondents rated the value of 10 community attributes, i.e., the importance of having each attribute in the "city or town in or near which they would most like to live." Each attribute was rated on a 4-point scale ranging from "undesirable" (1) to "essential" (4). The attributes were: a) nearness to relatives, b) entertainment facilities (e.g., theaters), c) educational system, d) clubs and organizations to join, e) medical care, f) stores and businesses, g) nearness to present friends, h) outdoor recreation, i) availability of employment, and j) opportunity for participation in public affairs. Individuals also reported the population size of their present community (under 2,500; 2,500-10,000; 10,000-50,000; 50,000-150,000; 150,000-500,000; or over 500,000), their age, and other socio-economic characteristics.

Results

Ratings of attribute values were converted to scores of 1 to 4; higher scores reflected greater judged desirability of an attribute. Separately for each of the four subsamples, ratings were factor analyzed by principal component-varimax rotation procedures (cf. Harman, 1960). In each subsample three orthogonal components were extracted with eigenvalues greater than 1.00. Rotation to the varimax criterion yielded the factor matrices displayed in Tables 1 and 2.

As shown in Table 1, the attribute values of those living in small communities reflected the three dimensions identified by Blake, Weigl, and Perloff (1975).[1/] The anticipated maintenance, entertainment, and personal relations dimensions were factors 1, 2, and 3, respectively among younger respondents, and factors 2, 1, and 3, respectively among older

Table 1

Factor Loadings of the Two Age Groups in Small Communities: Study 1

Community Attributes	Community Size: Under 65 Factor 1	Under 65 Factor 2	Under 65 Factor 3	Under 65 h	Under 65 $\bar{X}$	Over 65 Factor 1	Over 65 Factor 2	Over 65 Factor 3	Over 65 h	Over 65 $\bar{X}$
Relatives	-.006	.038	.785	.618	2.46	.074	.068	.831	.700	2.77
Entertainment	.216	.672	.043	.501	2.53	.681	.263	.173	.563	2.40
Schools	.577	.269	-.068	.410	3.58	.262	.634	-.073	.474	3.35
Organizations	.067	.730	.141	.557	2.28	.843	.089	.025	.719	2.43
Medical	.784	.133	.022	.634	3.56	.079	.744	.150	.583	3.47
Stores	.637	.180	.196	.477	2.98	.342	.580	.235	.509	3.09
Friends	.104	.059	.778	.620	2.71	-.013	.148	.804	.669	2.94
Participation	.121	.565	-.022	.334	2.96	.041	.583	.127	.357	3.00
Outdoor Recreation	.209	.639	.010	.452	2.86	.743	.190	-.086	.596	2.68
Employment	.759	.106	.026	.587	3.40	.178	.703	.021	.527	3.25
Eigenvalue	2.874	1.231	1.084	-	-	3.244	1.413	1.041	-	-
Total Variance	28.7%	12.3%	10.8%	-	-	32.4%	14.1%	10.4%	-	-

respondents. Comparison of the two age groups reveals that the two are highly comparable in all respects but one, participation in public affairs. Older individuals saw such opportunities as akin to attributes providing for the maintenance of the community and its residents, while younger persons saw participation in the same light as the recreational opportunities offered by the community.

Were younger and older residents comparable in more urban locales? Table 2 clearly indicates that the two were not. The three basic dimensions of Blake, et al., emerged among younger respondents. Factor 1, corresponding to the maintenance function, was composed of schools, medical facilities, stores, and employment. Factor 2, reflecting the recreation realm, was formed of entertainment facilities, clubs and organizations, and outdoor recreation. Factor 3 pertained to nearness to friends and to relatives and was the expected personal relations dimension. Participation in public affairs was loaded somewhat on both the maintenance and the entertainment dimensions.

An entirely different configuration appeared among those over 65. Factor 1 was composed of schools, availability of employment, entertainment facilities, clubs and organizations, outdoor recreation, and opportunity to participate in public affairs. Factor 2 was formed by medical care, stores and businesses, and, to a lesser extent, entertainment facilities. Factor 3 pertained to nearness to friends and to relatives; this appeared to be the same personal relations dimension found in the other three factor analyses.

Discussion

Results were consistent with the hypotheses. In small towns and rural areas resident evaluations of community attributes clustered into the expected maintenance, personal relations, and recreation dimensions. In both age groups conceptually comparable three factor patterns emerged. In larger communities a cleavage emerged between older and younger residents. While the younger residents displayed the hypothesized three factor pattern, older residents visualized the attributes from a different perspective. We would hypothesize that the perceived functions found among the more elderly reflect their degree of integration into the larger community. Factor 1 seemed to represent services and facilities that may be important to the majority of the population but are less directly useful to elderly residents. Rather, these attributes may be particularly pertinent to the world of the working age majority. Hence, it might be labeled a "normative maintenance" dimension. Lawton's (1977) review of numerous past studies suggest that these are the areas in which frequency of usage typically decreases among the elderly due to various biological, social, and economic deprivations. That attributes composing factor 1 may be less personally relevant to the elderly does not necessarily imply that the aged view them as unimportant

Table 2

Factor Loadings of the Two Age Groups in Urban Communities: Study 1

Community Attributes	Community Size: Under 65 Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	h	$\bar{X}$	Over 65 Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	h	$\bar{X}$
Relatives	.115	-.136	.765	.617	2.46	.256	-.056	.801	.710	2.83
Entertainment	.154	.735	.070	.568	2.69	.592	.222	.055	.403	2.60
Schools	.714	.210	-.046	.556	3.58	.550	.178	.134	.353	3.43
Organizations	.030	.773	.054	.601	2.42	.571	.310	-.096	.431	2.53
Medical	.784	.194	.004	.652	3.62	.200	.814	.128	.720	3.57
Stores	.378	.305	.302	.327	3.10	.206	.797	.052	.680	3.13
Friends	-.038	.160	.785	.644	2.70	-.014	.222	.813	.711	2.95
Participation	.341	.378	.002	.259	2.98	.670	.040	.216	.498	2.96
Outdoor Recreation	.260	.552	-.061	.376	2.92	.724	.046	.072	.532	2.80
Employment	.720	.041	.155	.544	3.53	.748	.148	.059	.584	3.32
Eigenvalue	2.809	1.276	1.059	-	-	3.342	1.129	1.060	-	-
Total Variance	28.1%	12.8%	10.6%	-	-	33.4%	12.2%	10.6%	-	-

or insignificant. People can appreciate the importance of an attribute to the community proper, even though it may provide little direct service to the individual personally. In fact, clubs and organizations item was loaded on factor 1, but was judged more important by those over 65 than by those under 65 ($p < .05$). Factor 2 contained attributes especially necessary to the survival of the often less physically robust and mobile elderly, and so might be labeled a "personal maintenance" dimension. Studies of frequency of service usage (cf. Lawton, 1977) suggest the importance of having these facilities readily available to the elderly in their immediate locale.

In summary, Study 1 supported the perceived community function hypotheses. In small towns and rural areas, residents may look to the local community to provide three functions: personal relations, maintenance, and recreation. Those over and those under 65 are comparable in this regard. In larger communities, the general populace still looks to the community environment to provide these functions. Those over 65, however, differ with younger residents in those communities. The generally less frequent contact of the aged with younger residents in the informal social networks and formal organizations in the larger communities permits them to view community attributes in a different light. In these larger communities it is possible that the aged may differentiate between "their facilities" (factor 1) and "our facilities" (factor 2), i.e., between services and facilities important to the populace as a whole and those especially essential to the aged themselves. In general, the pattern of results in larger communities indicates that the specific attributes providing a particular perceived function may vary with the size (type) of community and with the specific subpopulation in question.

STUDY 2

In overview, Study 2 was initiated to answer four questions. First, would the hypothesized fourth perceived function emerge as a distinct dimension when suitable attributes were included in the analysis? Second, would the essential comparability of the two age groups in smaller communities be replicated when a different group of respondents at a later point in time were analyzed? Third, were the results of Study 1 a "fluke" of the methodology used, or would the basic perceived functions still be present when different type of rating scales and different attributes were included in the analysis? Finally, are the four functions similarly related to adequacy of the current community environment?

It was predicted that a maintenance dimension would include facilities and services whose availability is critical to the health and physical support of residents no matter what their age. Stores, shopping facilities, locally available hospital services would be pertinent here. A personal relations function would include accessability of friends and other features permitting the person to form close personal relationships with others. A recreation dimension would be composed of both outdoor recreation and indoor

entertainment facilities, attributes providing a wide range of opportunities for fun and relaxation. Finally, opportunities to learn new skills and chances for self improvement are attributes practically defining the hypothesized personal development function. In light of the previously discussed non-comparability of personal development functions and recreation attributes, it was expected that these attributes would cluster together in a dimension distinct from that composed of recreation facilities.

Next, it was predicted that the younger and older residents would converge in their assessments of the role of these community attributes. The relative high integration of the elderly into the informal social networks and formal organizations of the larger community (Bultena, 1969; Langford, 1962; Powers, et al., 1975; Schooler, 1970; Youmans, 1963) would encourage the old to agree with the young about the relevance of the attributes to the four functions.

Further, it has long been known (e.g., Campbell and Fiske, 1959) that a study's results may be at least somewhat a reflection of the specific methods and measures used in that study. Were the distinctions among the three functions obtained in Study 1 a spurious result of the specific rating scale format and survey items used in that investigation? To verify that these distinctions among the functions were more than simply an artifactual bias, Study 2 attempted to replicate the results with 11-point bidirectional rating scales rather than a 4-point unidirectional scale and with different attribute descriptions. The final focus of the study was to extend the analysis of the contributions of community attributes to residents' well-being. That older and younger residents are comparable in the functions they see community attributes to play does not necessarily imply that these attributes are equally relevant to whether older and younger residents feel the local community is currently meeting their needs. Similarly, that residents visualize an attribute as making substantial contribution to the adequacy of one's community environment does not mean that the successful operation of that attribute will be associated with a more adequate community environment. Among others, Campbell and Converse (1976) have documented the frequent lack of correspondence between individuals' verbalizations of the importance of an object/event to their well-being and statistical estimates of the association between the presence/condition of those items and measures of their well-being.

The four perceived functions should be differentially relevant to residents' subjective well-being. By definition, maintenance attributes are essential to the physical survival of residents. Hence, the adequacy of the maintenance attributes should make a unique contribution to the degree the present community environment is meeting residents' needs. It was predicted, then, that the judged adequacy of maintenance attributes would contribute to residents' satisfaction with the present community, even when the contributions of the other three functions are considered. Next, the contribution of close personal ties to both the viability of the residential community qua community (Goudy, 1977; Warren, 1970) and to the individual's mental health and subjective well-being has been well documented (e.g., Bradburn and Caplovitz, 1965; Phillips, 1967). This is apparent among the elderly as well as in the general populace (Larson, 1978; Lawton and Nahemow, 1973; Lowenthal and Havens, 1968). Although proximity to or contact with significant others is not necessarily indicative of a positive tenor of

those interpersonal relationships (e.g., Shanas and Townsend, 1963), the former do provide the basis for the emergence of positive, beneficial relationships (Athanasion and Yoshioka, 1973; Festinger, et al., 1950; Nahemow and Lawton, 1975). It was expected, then, that the judged adequacy of the personal relations attributes would be associated with greater community satisfaction in both age groups. On the other hand, in both age groups the adequacy of the personal development attributes should make a minimal contribution to the degree the community is meeting the needs of residents. A need hierarchy perspective, such as that of Maslow (1962) or Mitchell, et al., (1971), might suggest that the majority of the populace is more oriented toward satisfaction of lower order physiological and social needs than of a higher order self-actualization need. Since only a minority of individuals would be acutely concerned with self-realization, the importance accorded to a community's personal development attributes by most persons would be relatively low. In the general populace, then, the judged adequacy of personal development attributes should be minimally predictive of satisfaction with the present community. Further, that suitable recreational activities can enhance one's quality of life is well known (e.g., Meyersohn, 1972). Yet, in comparison to younger individuals, the old may underutilize entertainment facilities (cf. Lawton, 1977) and be less appreciative of outdoor leisure activities at least those demanding physical exertion (e.g., Christenson and Yoesting, 1973). It was hypothesized, then, that the judged adequacy of local recreation attributes would be more predictive of community satisfaction among younger than among older individuals.

Method

Respondents

Utility listings provided the sampling frame to reflect the heads of households in two essentially rural counties in Indiana. In neither county was there an incorporated place of more than 3,000 persons. Separately for each county, a stratified proportional sample of 465 names was selected to represent the first county, and 958 the other. Stratification of each county was based on township boundaries. There were 13 townships in each counties, and the proportions drawn from each stratum to the total county sample was based on the proportion of households in each township to the total number of households for each county. All heads of households with listed phone numbers were contacted by phone, asked for their cooperation, and mailed the questionnaire. Two reminders were also sent, approximately two weeks apart, to those people who had not previously responded. Those not contacted by phone were sent the questionnaire with a more extensive cover letter asking their cooperation. The two additional mailings were also sent to those who had not responded previously. In all, 283 responded in the first and 504 the other county, yielding a total response rate of 60.9% and 61.0%, respectively. The two samples were combined in the analysis below. Elimination of individuals who did not provide the necessary data reduced the sample to 752, 460 under and 292 over 60 years of age.

Measures

Respondents were instructed:

> "Think about the least <u>any</u> community must have in it, or very close by, for you to be happy and content living there. How important is it to have the following in or very close by the community, so that no travel is needed to get it?"

Individuals then rated each of the attributes on an 11-point scale ranging from "don't want locally," through "don't care" (6), to "must have locally" (11). The attributes were: a) "near to friends," b) "much outdoor recreation (like parks)," c) "high quality public hospitals," d) "extensive indoor entertainment (like movies)," e) "good stores and shopping facilities," f) "opportunities for self-improvement (like hobby clubs, adult education)," g) "chances to develop close, warm relationships with others," h) "range of places for fun and relaxation," and i) "opportunities locally to learn new skills and develop one's talents." Next, respondents rated their satisfaction with each of these attributes "as they now exist in your own community." Ratings were made on a 7-point scale anchored at 1 ("very dissatisfied") and 7 ("very satisfied"). Further, respondents completed a scale of six closed, mixed response format items, which described their satisfaction with their present community in general.[2] Finally, individuals reported their age and other socio-economic characteristics.

<u>Results and Discussion</u>

As in Study 1, ratings of attribute values were converted to scores of 1 to 11, higher scores indicating greater judged desirability. Separately for each of the two age groups, ratings were factor analyzed by principal component-varimax rotation procedures (Harman, 1960). To test the hypothesized preference configurations, a four factor solution was specified <u>a priori</u> (see Table 3).[3]

The four predicted dimensions emerged. Factor 1 was composed of local opportunities to learn new skills and develop one's talents, and opportunities for self improvement (like hobby clubs, adult education). Range of places for fun and relaxation, indoor entertainment, and outdoor recreation were loaded principally on factor 3. As hypothesized, then, a cleavage appeared between personal development and recreation attributes in the orientations of small community residents. Factor 2, representing proximity to friends and to relatives, and factor 4, composed of stores-shopping facilities and public hospitals, were the anticipated personal relations and maintenance dimensions.

Further, the patterns of factor loadings in the two age samples were strikingly comparable. Not only the overall configuration, but also the magnitude of the attribute loadings and the proportion of variance explained by a factor were highly consistent across samples. This correspondence supports the hypothesis that in small communities older and younger groups visualize the roles played by the community attributes in a similar manner.

Were the four functional areas as relevant to community satisfaction

Table 3

Factor Loadings of Two Age Groups in Small Communities: Study 2

Community Attributes	65 and Over						Under 65					
	Personal Development 1	Personal Relations 2	Recreation 3	Maintenance 4	h	$\bar{X}$	Personal Development 1	Personal Relations 2	Recreation 3	Maintenance 4	h	$\bar{X}$
Places For Fun	.499	.091	<u>.629</u>	.020	.655	6.35	.422	.037	<u>.662</u>	-.022	.617	6.99
Indoor Entertainment	.300	-.175	<u>.609</u>	.310	.588	4.98	.254	.015	<u>.655</u>	.264	.563	5.60
Outdoor Recreation	-.081	.218	<u>.828</u>	.003	.739	7.23	-.025	.071	<u>.854</u>	.024	.736	7.87
Stores and Shopping	.184	.215	.045	<u>.745</u>	.637	8.76	.193	.033	.094	<u>.658</u>	.480	8.94
Public Hospitals	-.024	-.101	.097	<u>.847</u>	.738	8.18	-.060	-.027	.051	<u>.810</u>	.663	8.77
Close Relationships	.378	<u>.761</u>	-.005	.025	.721	7.77	.458	<u>.711</u>	.005	-.102	.726	7.59
Near To Friends	-.227	<u>.801</u>	.157	.057	.720	8.48	-.203	<u>.865</u>	.101	.078	.805	8.15
Learn New Skills	<u>.806</u>	-.101	.066	.039	.666	6.76	<u>.778</u>	-.052	.151	.018	.631	6.91
Self Improvement	<u>.768</u>	.151	.144	.137	.652	7.03	<u>.751</u>	.076	.197	.182	.642	6.95
Eigenvalue	2.555	1.356	1.193	1.014	-	-	2.547	1.250	1.106	.962	-	-
Total Variance	28.4%	15.1%	13.3%	11.3%	-	-	28.3%	13.9%	12.3%	10.7%	-	-

among the older as among the younger individuals? To answer this question, five composite scores were computed. First, responses to each of the six items of the community satisfaction scale were converted to standard (Z) scores and summed to form an overall community satisfaction score for each respondent.[4] The higher the score the less was the degree of satisfaction expressed.[4] Next, a "function satisfaction" score was computed for each of the four attribute functions. The satisfaction ratings of those attributes forming a factor in Table 3 were averaged for each respondent. For example, one's personal relations satisfaction score was the mean of that person's ratings of proximity to friends and chances to form close relationships on the 7-point attribute satisfaction scales. Each respondent, then, received four function satisfaction scores. Higher scores indicated greater satisfaction with the relevant attributes.

Separately for the older and the younger samples, the overall community satisfaction scores formed the dependent variable and the four function satisfaction scores the independent variables in an additive multiple linear regression analysis. The regressions were significant in both the older ($F = 11.128$, $p < .001$, $df = 4/287$) and the younger samples ($F = 33.273$, $p < .001$, $df = 4/455$).[5] Table 4 presents the degree to which satisfaction with the attributes was associated with overall community satisfaction within each age group.[6] Personal relations, recreation, and maintenance made separate contributions to the community satisfaction of younger respondents. With older persons, however, community satisfaction was associated with only the maintenance and personal relations attributes.

Results, then, were consistent with hypotheses. In both age groups satisfaction with maintenance attributes was uniquely predictive of community satisfaction. By definition, such attributes are essential to residents physical welfare. The adequacy of the personal relations attributes was also predictive of community satisfaction, consistent with the assumed importance of interpersonal affective ties to mental health and subjective quality of life. In neither group was the personal development arena uniquely predictive of community satisfaction. As implied by current need hierarchy perspectives, community attributes directly pertinent to self-realization would be less relevant to residents in general than would attributes keyed to "lower order" physiological and social needs.

The major difference between the two age groups was in the role of recreational attributes. Satisfaction with recreational facilities was predictive of overall community satisfaction among those under 60, but not among those over 60 years of age. This result implies that when considering the quality of life offered by the community environment the recreational attributes are given higher priority by the young than by the old. Such an interpretation is consistent with the literature suggesting that elderly individuals typically use local entertainment facilities substantially less than other community facilities, and that the elderly may use outdoor recreational facilities, at least those requiring extensive physical exertion,

Table 4

Community Satisfaction as a Function of Dimension Satisfaction Within Each Age Group: Study 2

Dimension	65 and Over			Under 65		
	$\bar{X}$	B	r	$\bar{X}$	B	r
Personal Development	4.01	-.133	-.301	3.88	-.059	-.363
Personal Relations	5.32	-.135*	-.275	5.21	-.296**	-.401
Recreation	4.05	-.043	-.211	3.72	-.131**	-.289
Maintenance	3.93	-.172**	-.277	3.46	-.166**	-.290
R		.367**	-		.476**	-

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$

less frequently than do the younger.

One point should be noted in passing. The present results do not necessarily demonstrate that recreation opportunities in general were more important to young than to older individuals. Although the results are not incompatible with such a conclusion, the data pertain strictly to facilities and services in the community environment. Hence, the relatively low importance accorded recreation attributes by the older respondents may reflect the fact that poor health, lack of transportation, financial difficulties and similar constraints that often bedevil the elderly (cf. Larson, 1978) may lead many to seek opportunities for relaxation and enjoyment from sources other than facilities like parks and movie theaters specifically developed for those purposes.

Conclusions and Implications

This pattern of results has several theoretical and practical implications. Most generally, results support the potential value of an "individual level perceived community function" approach to understanding the role of community attributes in residents' subjective well-being. Support was found for the existence of four perceptual dimensions in the orientations toward attributes of the residential community displayed by household heads living in small towns and rural areas. The dimensions did not appear to be a quirk of the methodology, for at least three of the dimensions were replicated even when the respondent sample, point in time, specific community attributes, and scaling format were varied. Further, the dimensions were differentially related to community satisfaction. The judged adequacy of attributes composing the personal relations and the maintenance dimensions were each positively related to community satisfaction. Discontent with recreation attributes was predictive of community satisfaction for residents under 60 but not for individuals over 60. As expected, contentment with the current condition of personal development attributes was unrelated to community satisfaction when residents' satisfaction with the other three function areas was controlled.

Further, the present results suggest how the "specific attribute approach" to understanding subjective well-being could be extended. The perceived function framework would be heuristic in suggesting which community attributes could be relevant to community satisfaction/subjective quality of life, how many attributes are necessary to cover the range of possible determinents, and <u>why</u> specific attributes are relevant to subjective well-being. This grafting of the perceived function approach to the specific attribute paradigm might enhance the explanatory power of the latter in accounting for community satisfaction/subjective well-being. It would not necessarily, however, increase the ability of the latter perspective to identify perceived functions of community attributes.

Results also have implications for theories of aging. The empirical data and the theoretical perspective suggest that these perceived functions could serve as criteria against which the elderly (or, for that matter, individuals in general) evaluate the adequacy of a given residential environment. If the quality of life experienced by individuals is a resultant of

such a comparative process (e.g., Campbell, Converse, and Rodgers, 1976), then these dimensions may serve as points of departure in identifying how a specific residential environment can be improved to make it more compatible with the unique needs of the elderly.

Services, programs, facilities, and other attributes of that particular environment should be evaluated not only in respect to how effectively they are performing a maintenance function, but also how adequately they are playing the other roles too. Along these lines, that an environment provides ample opportunities for close personal relationships or for recreation does not necessarily mean that personal development opportunities will be available. Illustratively, both younger and older respondents in the present investigation drew a distinction between personal development and recreation attributes, as well as differentiating between these and personal relations opportunities.

Finally, the current approach would suggest a methodology for designing local services and programs for the elderly of a specific community. Suppose that a particular service or facility is seen by the elderly as part of functions A and B but irrelevant to functions C and D. Will contemplated changes in a service delivery system ensure the continued provision of functions A and B? Could it be modified to also provide for functions C and D? A more realistic situation might be one in which a technically superior service is introduced, but suffers underutilization by the target clientele. Identifying the associations the elderly see between the service and community attributes involved in the principal perceived functions might help to explain the basis for this resistance or indicate how utilization can be improved. Is the service seen as relevant to none of the functions? Is it seen as relevant to a function, but that function is of low priority? Is the service seen by the target clientele to play a role different than the functions intended by the service providers? These questions could be addressed within a particular community by analyzing how a specific service (e.g., a given nutritional program for the aged) or facility (e.g., a senior citizen center) is related to attributes composing each of the perceived functions. Multidimensional scaling or factor/cluster analyses of public preferences toward relevant community attributes as identified in opinion surveys of local residents may be useful in this regard. Such studies may indicate ways to modify local services/facilities so as both to better meet the unique needs of the target clientele and also to more effectively secure the support of the general public.

FOOTNOTES

1/ Comparable results appeared in separate analyses of communities of under 2,500 and areas of 2,500-10,000 population. Hence, analyses were combined in Table 1.

2/ Illustratively, respondents were asked, "How close is this community to being the kind of place you would like it to be?" Response alternatives were: "very close," "close," "pretty far," and "very far." Another item was, "How would you compare living in this community as it is now with living in most other places in the country?" Alternative responses were: "there is much better," "there is better," "about the same," "here is better," "here is much better."

3/ For this reason, the eigenvalue of .962 obtained in the under 65 sample was accepted, although it was slightly below the commonly accepted 1.00 cut off.

4/ The scale appeared to be meaningful. At the same time as the present study, an independent mail survey was conducted on a random sample of 382 individual heads of households in the same 26 townships. In that survey, the six item scale displayed substantial reliability, Cronbach's alpha of .77. Further, it correlated .66 (p .01) with a separate four item scale of the desire for change in the present community environment. Corrected for attenuation due to unreliability in both scales, the estimated correlation increased to .749. In the present survey, it again demonstrated substantial reliability, Cronbach's alpha = .80 in the entire sample. Further, it again correlated significantly with the separate four item scale of the desire for change in the present community. The correlations were .459 (p .01, df = 458) among the younger sample and .488 (p .01, df = 290) among the older respondents.

5/ The appropriateness of the linearity assumption was supported by four bivariate trend analyses (cf. Winer, 1971). Not a single non-linear trend obtained significance when possible linear associations were controlled.

6/ As was required to test the hypotheses, this analysis was designed to assess the relationship between attribute satisfaction and overall community satisfaction within given age groups. The format cannot, nor was it intended to, indicate the degree to which the association of attribute and overall community satisfaction depended upon years of age per se. Clearly, as assumed in the hypotheses, the magnitude of the association found in a given age group can depend upon income, health, access to services and other characteristics correlated with age.

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